

Hong Kong's "May 16th" Demonstration, Commemorating the 52nd Anniversary of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution

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Summary: On May 16, afternoon: Hong Kong's Mao Zedong Thought Study Group organized a mass demonstration in Kowloon, in commemoration of the 52nd anniversary of the May 16 Circular and the 52nd anniversary of Chairman Mao's launching of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Fifty-two years ago on May 16th 1966 an expanded session of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee Chinese Communist Party passed the draft of the guiding program document "Circular from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China," delivered by Chairman Mao Zedong.

This was the famous "May 16 Circular." The issuing of this circular symbolized the spread of the magnificent campaign of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution throughout the area of the entire country.

After Chairman Mao's passing, although the GPCR which Mao himself launched suffered an official total renouncement, the spirit of the Cultural Revolution grew deep in the hearts of the masses. Especially in the last few years, as all sorts of problems increasingly emerge caused by the reforms and opening up, this has caused more and more people to look back and rethink the Cultural Revolution. It must be admitted, commemorating the Cultural Revolution and reflecting over the reforms has already become a historical trend that cannot be evaded.

The direction of today's demonstration was undertaken by the Hong Kong Mao Zedong Study Group's director Lin Minjie. He held up a portrait of Chairman Mao at the far front of the demonstration's ranks. People shouted "Long Live Chairman Mao!" "Long Live the Great

Proletarian Cultural Revolution.” They sang the "Internationale" and "Sailing the Seas Depends on the Helmsman.” They held up red flags and all sorts of banner slogans denouncing the capitalist roaders, and publicized Mao Zedong Thought as they walked through Kowloon District.



Two hundred people participated in today's demonstration, including left-wing masses from inland provinces and municipalities. A day before the demonstration, they also held a research conference titled: "Discuss the Cultural Revolution, Reflect on the Reforms." These connected practical criticism of capitalist restoration, and inquired into how to, support Chairman Mao's Continuing Revolutionary Thought, and rebuild socialism under new historical conditions.

"Red Digest" (Hongse Cankao) editor Chen Hongtao accepted an invitation to moderate the research conference. He made an extemporaneous speech on "Living Study and Living Use of Mao Zedong Thought, Carrying on the Class Struggle to Oppose Forms of Revisionism." Below is the recording compiled of the entire speech:



Comrades and Friends, Hello Everyone!

I am Red Digest Editor Chen Hongtao. Firstly I want to thank the comrades at the Hong Kong Red Study Group for inviting me to participate in this conference. Director Lin Minjie also presented me with a mission by letting me moderate this conference. This is teacher Lin's mission for me. I'll struggle to not fail to live up to his trust.

Tomorrow is May 16. We know, 52 years ago, May 16 1966, the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party passed the draft guiding program document delivered by Chairman Mao Zedong "Circular from the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China for the spreading of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution," known as "The May 16 Circular." It symbolized the start of the campaign of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. The Hong Kong Mao Zedong Thought Study Group organized this conference in order to commemorate the 52nd anniversary of the May 16 Circular, and to commemorate the 52nd anniversary of Mao Zedong's launch of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

The Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution is the complete embodiment of Mao Zedong's Continuing Revolutionary Thought under the dictatorship of the proletariat. Its goal was to consolidate the dictatorship of the proletariat, protect the position of the laboring peoples as the masters of their country, and explore how to oppose revisionism and prevent revisionism on a path that bridges the period from socialism to communism. Mao Zedong Thought is regarded by Marxists as a third milestone in the Communist Movement, because of the theory and practice of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

But, after Chairman Mao passed away in 1976, the capitalist roaders within the party launched a

coup. After the full restoration of the capitalist class, followers of Chairman Mao were purged and suppressed, the laboring peoples lost their rights as masters of their country, and Cultural Revolution Thought suffered total official renouncement. This has caused those seated here—many supporters of Chairman Mao’s Continuing Revolutionary Thought—to only be able to openly commemorate the 52nd anniversary of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution by coming from the mainland to Hong Kong. There are even several comrades from the mainland who originally wanted to participate in this activity but received all sorts of pressure and restrictions and thus were unable to make the trip. This, in what is known as a socialist country administered by a communist party, certainly is “very characteristic.”

So, as a result of this, can or can it not be said that in actual contemporary Chinese society, the Cultural Revolution has through official negation become a blown away page of history? We of course cannot think this so.

Marxists talk of dialectics. We participate today in the Hong Kong Mao Zedong Thought Study Group's Commemorative Deliberation of the Cultural Revolution’s 52nd Anniversary. In Hong Kong. In this completely capitalist society. And we can support this red position of spreading of Chairman Mao’s continuing revolutionary thought. And can have Director Lin Minjie representing us comrades sticking to this position. This all in itself proves the great significance of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution.

Many people know, Director Lin Minjie was a rebel faction comrade in the mainland during the era of the Cultural Revolution. He experienced personally the campaign of the Cultural Revolution. In 1975 because of family matters he arrived in Hong Kong. Since then it has been more than 40 years, and because of this he “avoided” the post-Cultural Revolution campaign of “expose, criticize, and investigate” (xie pi cha) for purging the rebel factions.

In the midst of the Cultural Revolution, he served as the party committee vice secretary of Fujian’s Quanzhou East City Commune. The commune’s first vice director and party committee secretary and party committee director Zhu Zancheng, in the midst of that cruel class vengeance was falsely charged as the lead criminal in the East City "Counter Revolutionary Strike, Smash, and Snatch" case, and was sentenced to death. At the same time as he was sentenced to death, the sentence was immediately carried out, as it was for that commune’s group committee secretary Cai Shuangzi and a brigade party branch secretary Wang Dezhu. It can be seen, if Teacher Lin hadn’t come to Hong Kong before the end of the Cultural Revolution, then he early on would have become the object of the counter-attack to settle old scores by the capitalist roaders.

I respect Teacher Lin very deeply. There are two reasons for this.

After relying on himself to establish a foothold in Hong Kong, he then did not content himself with peacefully aging older. He is almost 80 years old, but consistently has campaigned to clear the names of his rebel faction comrades-in-arms of the past, upheld the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution, and unceasingly struggled to publicize Chairman Mao Zedong's Continuing Revolutionary Thought. This amounts to a communist who has not forgotten past convictions.

The second reason is as follows. In terms of myself, although I was born after 1970, and did not have the opportunity to participate in the Cultural Revolution, my father was an older cadre at the time who supported the rebel faction. As a result of this, after the Cultural Revolution he was sentenced to prison. The influence of coming forth from this family, on top of my own experience, and consciousness of social reality determined my life outlook and values. I chose, like my father's generation, to believe in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. I firmly believe that the only way out for our country and people is through upholding Chairman Mao's Continuing Revolutionary Thought and rebuilding socialist public ownership. Teacher Lin is a rebel faction member who has not forgotten past convictions. In the mainland, there are many old rebel faction comrades like him. I am willing to follow their path and to serve as the second generation that upholds "it is right to rebel!" Today all those who are able to sit together are comrades. But at the same time, I have, from a rebel faction old comrade such as Teacher Lin, a feeling inside of ignited firewood imparting the Cultural Revolutionary spirit.

Every year the Hong Kong Mao Zedong Study Group organizes public commemorations on the anniversaries of Mao Zedong's birthday, Mao Zedong's passing, and the day of the May 16th Circular for the Cultural Revolution's spread. Those who participate include the city's laborers, small proprietors, and intellectual stratum. Together this presents a certain representative characteristic. In the capitalist world, the transmission of Marxism is easily contained within the academic research of schools and salons. But Hong Kong's Mao Zedong Thought Study Group has clearly broken out of these confines, and has spread to Hong Kong's common laborers. Furthermore it is because of this that the Study Group and the interior's left-wing movement have been able to exert a mutual influence on each other, and to effect mutual encouragement of each other. It cannot be denied, this is one sort of appearance of the taking root and sprouting of the Cultural Revolution among Hong Kong's laboring class stratum.

At the same time, today we can see in the mainland, in any place, whether it is Beijing, Shanghai, Hubei, Henan, Sichuan, Shaanxi, as well as the old third line area [so-called "mainland rear" of the 1960s], including in Chinese capitalism's most developed cities such as Shenzhen and other southeastern coastal cities, as long as there are those who are concerned with China's present problems, and consider the future way out for people, there are those who spontaneously study and publicize all sorts of Marxism-Leninism Mao Zedong Thought study small groups and red song groups. Why? It's because of the Cultural Revolution, because of Chairman Mao! Those

who completely negate the Cultural Revolution using the results of the economic reforms and opening up have already completely verified the greatness and correctness of Mao Zedong's launch of the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution. Through the reverse lessons of the economic reforms, more and more people already have recognized that no one can tear away the Cultural Revolution and Chairman Mao from China's history, present and future.

Of course, while we are both studying and publicizing Marxism Leninism Mao Zedong Thought, there is some formal difference between Hong Kong and the interior. The Hong Kong Study Group is registered with the Hong Kong government, and it is a governmentally acknowledged and legal association. To the present, in the interior, all sorts of forms of Mao Zedong study small groups and red song groups have not been approved for registration by one responsible government office or another. Putting forward a clear example, tomorrow afternoon, everyone will participate in the Hong Kong Mao Zedong Study Group's mass demonstration organized in Kowloon City. It will use this method to commemorate the 52nd anniversary of Mao's launch of the Cultural Revolution. This has received the approval and protection of Hong Kong's police. But this sort of thing would be impossible in the interior. We know, last year on the eve of the 124th anniversary of Chairman Mao's birth, at the time the masses of Zhangjiakou in Hebei spontaneously organized a rally, the local public safety department did not approve. The reason they provided was unexpectantly that the rally would "seriously disturb the social order!" There likewise was the demolition by the local government of the Henan Luoning statue of Chairman Mao, the local government's destruction of the memorial hall for Chairman Mao built by the masses in Luohe, Henan, and the Panyu District Police arrests and online manhunts suffered by several youth study groups in Guangzhou studying Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. Over the years, this sort of government behavior detested by the masses has long been a common site.

I am talking about this point because I have been able to experience that this difference between the interior and Hong Kong easily makes us left-wing friends in the interior focus on Hong Kong's "legal registration certificates." This makes us feel "legal" study and publicity is beyond our grasps, to the point that in the midst of actual struggle there is a bit of feeling of not being bold and assured that righteousness is on our side.

Actually, what I want to say is there is absolutely no need for this! Although there are not people willing to register us, at the same time there is absolutely no necessity! Although people are not willing to register us, we all the same have a legal existence! This is because regardless of whether you are this characteristic or that characteristic as long as there is a socialist country led by a communist party, as long as Marxism Leninism Mao Zedong Thought is still written in the party constitution, then our publicity and study of Marxism Leninism Mao Zedong Thought, this sort of behavior itself is of the most legal character!

Today's China already has truly completed capitalist restoration, but this restoration was activated by capitalist roaders within the party who stole the people's power. What they stole was the revolutionary legacy left behind by Chairman Mao. Therefore to parade the legal character of their own rule, they could not but hang a portrait of Chairman Mao in Tiananmen Square. But we are very clear, they are only trying to turn Chairman Mao into a harmless religious icon to make offerings to, in order to fool the people, and to extend the life of their rule. They fear the people will wake up, fear that revolutionary theory when mastered by the masses will become a material force that will smash them. Therefore they are not willing to see the people commemorating Chairman Mao, not willing to see the people on their own studying and publicizing Mao Zedong Thought, and want to monopolize the right to interpret Mao Zedong Thought, to pump away Mao Zedong's "it's right to rebel" spirit in order to decorate the facade. This is just like not long ago on the 200th anniversary of Marx's birth, when they made a big effort to commemorate, and orchestrated large commemorative assemblies. China Central Television (CCTV) also continuously broadcasted several special programs, repeatedly deceitfully saying "Marxism was Right" but actually entirely not putting forward that the soul of Marxism is class struggle. Even less do they dare to state that the mission of communists is to annihilate private ownership!

This sort of classic behavior of "advertising a lamb to sell dog meat" and "waving the red flag to oppose the red flag" is truly the Chinese characteristic of today! It is also the difference between China's capitalism and the capitalism of any other country in the world. True Marxism-Leninist-Maoists not only should grasp this essence. Furthermore they should see that since the revolutionary legacy that Chairman Mao gave to the people has been stolen, since one must first wave the red flag before one opposes the red flag, then they have waved our red flag, and there must be a price for this—the creation of conditions for Marxist-Leninist-Maoists who want to continue the revolution under the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie.

We certainly don't have bourgeois legal protections for formal freedom of expression like in Hong Kong, but we have the freedom to publicize Marxist-Leninist-Maoist revolutionary theory, to promote socialism and to expose revisionism, to criticize capitalist freedoms; we don't have formal capitalist laws that permit freedom to strike, but we unemployed people can seek out the government rather than the capitalists in order to protect state-owned assets, can report proof of the corrupt privatization of public assets, defend rights according to "reason," we have the freedom to collectively visit higher authorities, we don't have the freedom to form associations, but we have the freedom to spontaneously organize all sorts of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism study small groups, research groups, red song groups, memorials for Chairman Mao, and the freedom to condemn Deng Xiaoping. They certainly will use all means to thwart us, to suppress us. This is the instinctive response of the bourgeoisie. But their thwarting and suppressing only will advance the education of more people to cast away illusions and prepare for struggle.

Today those seated, for instance Henan Zhengzhou's Songying and many other comrades all are from the front lines of the mass struggle in the long-term battle to oppose capitalism and restore socialism. They have already amassed rich experience in struggle. I believe everyone can understand more than me, especially the laboring people who served as the masters of the country in the era of the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution, that the "Chinese characteristic" democratic rights that we have fought for and retained are different from those in any country. We completely can make full use of these sorts of democratic rights, and stand on the high ground of socialism, advance the class struggle to oppose revisionism, and uphold Chairman Mao's Continuing Revolutionary Thought to the end!

Chen Hongtao, May 15, 2018, Hong Kong Kowloon

